For the first time in the history of an international music conference, a panel of three presentations was held about Paraguayan music. The event happened during the Annual Conference of the British Forum for Ethnomusicology (BFE) at the University of Sheffield on April 20-23, 2017.

Professor Timothy D. Watkins (Texas Christian University) opened the panel with a talk about the cultural associations that link the Paraguayan harp and guitar to Guarani indigenous culture and thus to Paraguayan national identity (paraguayidad). These two instruments are at the musical and symbolic heart of the conjunto folclórico. The Paraguayan harp, often referred to as the arpa india, has become the most highly-regarded Paraguayan folk instrument, and is seen as emblematic of Paraguayan culture. The identity of the guitar has become fused with that of the mbaraká, a Guaraní shamanic rattle, for which it sometimes serves as a replacement.
Professor Alfredo Colman (Baylor University Texas) talked about one of the most prolific Paraguayan composers of both classical and popular music, Florentín Giménez (1925). Professor Colman presented a theoretical framework to interpret Giménez’s concern with cultural archetypes, such as Paraguayan history, Guaraní culture and mestizaje, which are systematically used by the composer to engage musically with Latin American traditional musics, as well as with Western European music forms and genres. Professor Colman showed how Giménez reinforces musical memories and prescribes how Paraguayan music can articulate and re-imagine a Paraguayan cultural identity.

Dr. Simone Krüger Bridge (Liverpool John Moores University) discussed the role of the guitar in Paraguay for expressing paraguayidad. Her academic analysis focused on "Danza Paraguaya" by Paraguayan composer Agustín Barrios Mangoré and showed the interrelatedness of this popular song with paraguayidad. Barrios’s "Danza Paraguaya" was recorded by the internationally renowned classical guitarist Luz Maria Bobadilla on the jazz album Barrios Hoy (2011), and by innovative rock guitarist Rolando Chaparro on the rock album Bohemio (2011). Dr. Krüger Bridge showed that both musical arrangements of "Danza Paraguaya" (in the style of jazz/choro and rock fusion) evoke strong ideas of paraguayidad.

The panel was highly regarded by the international audience. Panel chair Stephen Stuempfle (Society for Ethnomusicology Executive Director) congratulated the speakers on their ground-breaking presentations, which ideally will inspire more Paraguayan music panels at other conferences. Noteworthy to mention is that the
Paraguayan newspaper *Ultima Hora* has published an article about the event (see http://www.ultimahora.com/musica-nacional-congreso-inglaterra-n1080336.html).